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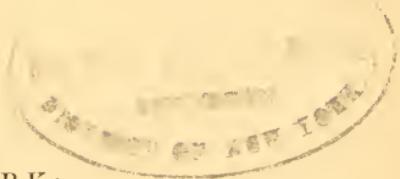
H O M E,

AND

O T H E R P O E M S .

B Y

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H O M E .

I.

Of all the words that grace our English tongue,
By peasant spoken, or by minstrel sung—
That touch the heart of youth, or like a spell
In second childhood's memory sweetly dwell,
The tenderest, holiest, loveliest of the throng,
Is *Home*,—the theme—the inspirer of my song.

What thrilling magic in the simple sound !
How, at its utterance, memory at a bound
Leaps over gulfs of years, forsakes the things
That make our common life, and on her wings
Bears us swift backward to the little cot—
The quiet, humble, tree-embowered spot,
That was our childhood's home. A moment's
space
She leaves us nestling near the dear old place.
A mother's pleasant face again we see,
And hear the sweet-toned voice that chid our
glee.

The little sister, darling of our plays,
Runs out to meet us as in other days.
The good old watch-dog, slave and friend of boy,
Enacts his wonted pantomime of joy.
The winding foot-path, leading from the gate ;
The trees that drooped around, or stood elate
In leafy pride ; the vine that climbed the wall,
And peeped in at the window, filling all
The air with such sweet verdurous perfume
As Eden gave when in its primal bloom,—
All these, and thousand other pleasant things
Of the old home, flit by, as on the wings
That Memory lends us we repose. False trust !
Sudden she drops us sprawling in the dust
Of common, cumbering cares, and mean concerns,
And to her daily tasks and toils returns.

But home is not in memory. Home is there
Where kind hearts mingle—where love sweetens
care ;
Where anger comes not—bickerings ne'er annoy ;
Where skill and labor willing hands employ ;
Where children prattle—where the daily strife
Of growth, and thought, and work, give zest to
life.

Cynics may sneer at home and homely things,
And barb their sneers with wit's malicious
stings :

The wise philosopher may boast in pride
Of higher joys than all the world's beside—

Of nobler studies, grander aims than those
That gather where the cottage ingle glows :
The wandering cosmopolitan a home
May find where'er his foot may chance to roam ;
All lands his country, every spot the place
That he loves best—his family the race ;
Yet all the pleasures, sweet contents that home
Its votaries brings, to them can never come.

The royal eagle with undazzled eye
Right towards the sun may mount, or sweep the
sky ;
May build his nest far up some beetling cliff—
Gibraltar's rock, or storm-swept Teneriffe,—
And thence, when waves run high and tempests
beat,
Look down with scorn on all beneath his feet ;
Or, darting from his perch in quest of prey,
Swoop down where lambkins skip or children
play ;—
Yet all the keenness of his fiery eye—
His lofty eyrie on the crag so high—
His sullen temper, look and port of pride—
His lofty flight where storms and clouds abide,—
Yield not to him the joy that fills the breasts
Of gentle warblers in their lowly nests—
Or flitting o'er the meads, or round the eaves,
Or twittering gaily 'mid the forest leaves.

II.

Behold a picture of a happy home !
Ten thousand of them—for where'er we roam
O'er this broad land they stand as thick and bright
As stars upon the blue of Heaven at night,
And shed a radiance pure as that above—
The light of liberty—religion—love :

Happy and hearty the family group ;
Never love weakens nor spirits droop.
Voices are cheery and laughter is sweet ;
Jests pass freely and sharp wits meet.
Labor is easy and care is light ;
Faces are fair and hands are white ;
Or faces are ruddy and hands are brown,
Just as you please in country or town.
Generous plenty covers the board ;
Nothing is wasted, and naught they hoard.
Never does Poverty leave their door
Without a blessing and something more.
Pleasant the words of their social speech ;
Kindly they listen each to each :
Never a quarrel, seldom a jar—
Frowns at a discount—smiles above par.

The grandmother sits in her easy chair,
Crowned with the crown that the aged wear ;
Swaying her frail form back and fro,
Conning the thoughts of the long ago.

Siniles flit over her furrowed face,
Enkindling gleams of the beauty and grace
That once were hers. But the vision flies,
And she wakes to see in her grandson's eyes,
As he gazes in hers with a wondering stare
To see his grandmother look so fair,
The self-same light that, years long gone,
She saw in the eyes of her true-loved one.
The rogue bursts out with a laugh, and away
To follow his boisterous, tireless play ;
Or to take his stand at the window pane
And watch if, approaching down the lane,
He can see from school the children come
With frolic and shouts and laughter home.

The mother moves with a simple grace,
A lightsome step and a pleasant face,
Amid the wearisome duties and cares
That yet with a cheerful heart she bears.
Nothing is toil where the heart is glad.
Pleasure is moil where the soul is sad.
Generous the evening meal she spreads,
And sunny the light that her fair face sheds.

The father comes from his toils and cares,
His labor of brain, or the work that wears
On muscle and brain alike, and hears,
With a joyous heart, as the gate he nears,
The gleeful shout of his romping boys
As they run to meet him and ask for toys,
Or claim a kiss, or a strong-armed toss
Up high over head. For never cross

Does their papa appear, nor, gloomy in brow,
Does he push them aside and say, "not now."
With laughter and boisterous jollity,
They enter their home.

'Tis a sight to see
This happy family round the board :
To witness the hush as the solemn word
Of grace is uttered--to see the twinkle
Of little eyes--then to hear the tinkle
Of little voices,—at last the rattle
Of dishes and knives at the evening battle.

Pleasantly passes the evening by,
As busy fingers the needles ply ;
And the children romp in their noisy play,
Or con their tasks for the coming day ;
Or books are read, or stories are told,
Or grandmother talks of the days of old.

Thus living and loving from day to day,
They do their duty as well as they may—
Never forgetting the time must come
When each shall go to a far off home,—
Leaving the family one by one,
And passing the dark flood all alone ;
But cheered by the hope in Him that died,
And the welcoming songs from the other side.

III.

The happiest home is not forever blest,
Nor joy the purest heart's perpetual guest.
Changes will come, and still must fall in gloom,
On sunniest hearths the shadows of the tomb.

Bright years have quickly come and swiftly
passed,
And each seemed brighter, happier than the
last.

Our loved ones are so near we ne'er can think
That *they* must sometime stand upon the brink
Of the dark-flowing river; or that soon
The bolt may fall, the sun go down at noon.

The dark woe comes, a little head lies low,
And stricken hearts are bleeding at the blow.
Mute sorrow broods where once were mirth and
song,

And bursting sobs the dreary hours prolong :
Sad whispers, heavy sighs, on deaf ears fall,
And muffled footfalls creep along the hall.
Here lie the little shoe and jaunty cap,
As if just laid aside for baby's nap.
The mother, a brief moment, thinks he sleeps.
Stung by the sweet deceit, again she weeps
More bitter tears, cries out with anguished moan,
How can I give thee up, my son, my son !

But tears, though hot as heart's blood, ne'er can
melt

The icy fetters which the dead have felt.

There can be no release—the precious clay
By tender hands is sadly borne away :

Day seems to die—the stars are lapped in gloom,
And all life's light seems quenched behind the
tomb.

But darkness is but light withdrawn ; the skies
Of sorrow have their dawn. Erewhile will rise
In the sad mother's heart, the hope-lit joy,
That, though can ne'er return her darling boy,
Sometime she'll go to him, and, in that day,
Will clasp him in the mansions far away.

Kindly and slow the sunshine glimmers back,
And sheds a tempered radiance o'er life's track.
The wound of grief is still upon the heart ;
And though quite healed, yet sometimes yields a
smart.

IV.

Many the story, tinged with saddest hue,
Of those who left the home their boyhood knew,
Lured by the love of gain, or urged away
By the same impulse, call it what you may,
That makes the birdling leave the parent nest,
And seek its mate and own sweet place of rest.

The birdling ne'er comes back, and e'en forgets
The downy couch where still the mother sits,
And waits, with sad, unreasoning concern,
The helpless fugitive's delayed return.

And so the youth, once parted from the roof
That was his childhood's shelter, long aloof
Oft holds his wandering feet, kept back by pride
From the loved covert where in peace abide
The longing ones, who, hourly, down the road
By which his way he took from their abode,
With straining eyes look forth. At length an
hour

There comes, when love of home asserts its
power ;
And, like the lodestone, wheresoc'er he roam,
'Twill point the way, and lead the wanderer
home.

But many a youth who left home's dear em-
brace,
Adorned with virtue and with manly grace,
And decked in truth's and honor's spotless robe,
To seek his fortune o'er the widening globe,
Through power of evil influence has been changed
In heart and life, and from his home estranged.
To it, now long forgot, he ne'er returns
To bless the fond old mother who still mourns
Her long-lost son, and in each bitter sigh
Prays but once more to see him ere she die.

But others still, of noble heart and aim,
Have borne through tempting ill a spotless fame,

And, far from home's control, maintained abroad
Integrity untouched, and faith in God.

List to a simple tale of one who left
His humble native home—himself bereft
Of all the solid comforts, simple joys,
Which he's a fool who recklessly destroys
Or needlessly forsakes. 'Tis a true tale
Of a brave heart as ever by the gale
Of young, adventurous hope was borne away
From the fond scenes where peace and friend
ship stay.

Through the steaming streets and alleys

 Of a far-off southern town,
Seeking victims for his malice,

 Prowls the plague-fiend up and down.
None but wanderers he seizes—

 Wanderers from the breezy zone,—
Strong young men who scorn diseases,

 Nor the Fever's terror own.

But their buoyant strength is futile ;
 Care and skill, of no avail.

Love may plead, but still the brutal,
 Fell destroyer will prevail.

Here is one—he came but lately
 From the rugged clime of Maine.

See ! his port is firm and stately—

 Brave his heart, and big his brain.
Can the Fever fright him ? Never !

 Will he fly before the blast

Of the Pestilence, or quiver
When its shadow's on him cast ?
True, unflinching, and stout-hearted,
Stands he calm while thousands fly.
But his steadfastness imparted
No exemption—he must die.
In the pest-house is he lying ;
Strangers watch around his bed.
See ! he gasps. Can he be dying—
And so soon ? His spirit's fled.
In the street the death-cart's rumbling,
Coming for its nightly load ;
And the cartman coffins tumbling
Over, cries—" Bring out your dead !"
"Let me kiss him for his mother!"
'Twas a tender woman lent
This sweet phrase, and like no other
Than a mother o'er him bent ;
Kissed the cold brow of that only
Wanderer from a far-off home,
Lying dead, and still, and lonely,
In that home whence none can roam.
Strong men turned away their faces,
Struggling with emotions deep ;
And the hardened undertaker,
Even he was forced to weep.
And when death's sad record reaches
Mother's, father's, sister's heart,
That kind woman's act when told them
Will assuage their sorrow's smart.

V.

A truce to sadness. Let us turn
To scenes of brighter tint, and learn
A tale of love and home.—Behold
A rural neighborhood unfold
Its modest scenes. A summer eve,
Calm, clear, and soft, begins to weave
Its lengthening web of shade and sheen
Across the landscape. Cleanly green
The meadows spread their grassy skirts
Adown the hill-slopes, or with girts
Of verdure belt the sedgy pond,
Where frogs their shrilly songs resound.
The brown-faced fields, now freshly sown,
Amid the emerald pastures thrown,
Seem but reflections of the clouds
That, flushed and golden, gaze in crowds,
Down from the sky ; as savage girls
Flock round a mirror, and their curls
And unveiled charms gaze at, in spell
Of wonder tranced—then run pell-mell.
And o'er the landscape far and near
Low-nestled, quiet homes appear;
And close-embracing orchards raise
Their bushy roofs, that sift the blaze
Of the declining sun ;—or stand
Like grim hussars, to guard the land.

On such an eve, in such a home,
Sure naught but happiness could come
To hearts of purity and truth,
That beat with the quick blood of youth.

The day was done, the sun had set
Beneath the line where earth had met,
Or seemed to meet, all day, the earth.
The fading light revealed the birth
Of myriad stars. More bright they grew,
But timidly trembled through the blue,
As, peering from their lofty spheres,
They viewed the march of earthly years.
Ages untold those silent stars
Have looked, undimmed, from their far cars,
On earth and men. They stood and gazed
When this great globe was formed, and praised
The mighty Power whose mandate twirled
Along her course the new-made world;
And down the track of time they still
Have watched, fast sentinels, and will
Till time shall end. And now once more
They stand in lustrous silence o'er
The gladsome place where worth and youth
Have met to plight their love and truth.

Within the rural mansion's walls
An unused brilliance lights the halls,
And through the half-closed shutter beaming
Whitens the greensward with its gleaming.
Garlands and flowers, bright and rare,
Shed sweetest perfume on the air.

But life is needed, and the grace
Of movement, and the blushing face
Of bashful maiden, to bestow
On this fair scene its loveliest glow.

At length, from cottage in the dale,
From mansion looking down the vale,
From stately home on height or heath,
Where cooling gales of summer breathe,
The bidden guests begin to come ;
And then arise the buzz and hum
Of human voices, as they utter
The kindly welcomes. Soon the flutter
Of fans and finery sets in,
With all the bustle and the din
Of evening parties. But the crowd,
Becoming large and growing loud,
Has felt a sudden hush. The glance
Of keen eyes turns to where advance,
With bashful steps, a youthful pair—
A manly form, a maiden fair.
In presence of the throng they stand ;
The daughter, sister, gives a hand
And a heart in it ; while are spoken
The vows that never can be broken—
That solemn troth which ne'er is given
But angels register it in Heaven.

With tears that will not be suppressed,
In anguished fondness, to her breast
The mother clasps her darling one,
Her daughter, now no more her own.

She weeps a moment, then imparts
The kiss that seals two willing hearts,
And blesses with a mother's prayer
The loved and happy wedded pair.
Then greetings follow quick and fast,—
The little sisters come in last,
And timid brothers, scarcely knowing
Whether to laugh or cry, but showing
Their better sense by doing neither,
Since there was chance of wrong in either.

The nuptial martyrs bear their part
With noble steadfastness of heart.
The jest goes round, and many a laugh
Rings out at witless jokes, not half
As funny as they seem. But still
They serve to send a welcome thrill
Of gaiety through the heavy crowd ;
As lightning from the summer cloud,
When stifling languors load the air,
Leaps fiercely out, and all is fair.

The farewells said—good wishes spoken—
The tearful kiss, the simple token
Of love bestowed—all fitly blended,—
And thus the wedding scene is ended.

A few days pass, and then the face,
So long the joy, the sun, the grace
Of that bright home, must be withdrawn—
Only, indeed, to make the dawn
Of a new home,—but still the starting
Out on a world unknown—the parting

From home and all its pleasant things,
So prized from helpless childhood, wrings
The bitter tears of poignant grief
From her young heart. For now how brief
Appear those happy, happy years !
What shadows dark the future bears !
Yet with a willing heart she goes,
Strong in the strength that love bestows,
And leaning on the manly arm
Of him who swore to keep from harm,
And guard and cherish as his life
His dear, confiding, youthful wife.
And soon the new home, like the old,
Grows bright, and warm, and glad, as fold
The years away their gathered wealth
Of life, and love, and joy, and health.

VI.

Happy the land where happy homes abound,
Which equal laws begirt in safety round ;
Where the soft wing of Peace, the angel,
bends
In sweet protection o'er them, and defends
From shafts of evil and the deathful blows
Of plotting traitors as of foreign foes ;
Where full prosperity, from boundless stores,
On thankful millions lavish plenty pours ;

Where virtue saves from love of sordid gain ;
Where love of country fires each heart and brain.

Thus happy was this land when treason flung
Its bloody banner out, and madly rung
The fearful tocsin of rebellious war,
Whose clangings fell on patriots like the jar
Of mighty thunderings, and their hearts con-
founded

As if the knell of Freedom had been sounded.
Only a moment's space the horror falls.

The lurid flames that blazed round Sumpter's
walls

Burned in each heart, till every patriot swore
That, from Atlantic to Pacific shore,
The good old flag should wave forevermore,
Though steeped in each foul-hearted traitor's
gore.

The summons was to war ; and from each
home,

From cot, from mansion, from beneath the dome
Where busy labor keeps its constant hum,
With ardent hearts the willing warriors come.

To go was easy—for the cause was grand.

“ ’Tis sweet to strive and die for native land.”

But *home* is sweet—and O ’tis hard to part
With wife and babes ! to wring a mother’s heart !
To say farewell when tears and sobs arise
As if they’d burst the heart and drown the eyes !
To snatch a kiss from hot and quivering lips,
And taste the briny dews that sorrow sips,—

And then receive a look from wild, red eyes,
Of dumb despair!—a look that never dies
Out of the memory, saying, in language plain
As words could utter—“ne'er to meet again!”
To break from clinging arms, and hear the moan
Of sobbing sorrow from the hopeless one
Left all alone!

O! he can have no heart,
Who, if a home is his, can lightly part
From its sweet cares and pleasures, and not feel
A pang of choking sorrow! Though the weal
Of native country seem to be his aim,
An empty bubble is his boasting claim.

The million *homes* that fill this vast domain
Of Freedom, *make* our country. All in vain
Would be the costly sacrifice of blood,
Which patriot heroes pour forth like a flood,
If civil power, and right to rule the state
Were the sole boon of victory. The great,
Transcendent end for which each patriot strives
Is to protect his *home*—preserve the lives
And rights of those whose weakness must depend
On him for succor. These he must defend;—
And make secure to his posterity
The glorious heritage of liberty
And righteous laws, transmitted by his sires,
Baptized in blood, and scorched in battle fires,
Although the bloody and tremendous strife
Demand his wealth—*his all*—his very life.

How dire the doom that surely must await
Those traitors infamous who brought the fate
Of horrid war upon this glorious land,
And whelmed in misery many a happy band
Of helpless ones, and cast o'er many a home
The gloom of death, the darkness of the tomb !

Behold a scene of every passing day.
Slow weeks on leaden wheels have rolled away
Since the sad hour when, turning from the gate,
The brave young husband saw his gentle mate
With tear-blurred face against the window-pane
For a last look. O how it stung again
His almost bursting heart ! He could not dare
Again look backward, for he knew that there
That sad, beseeching face still pressed the glass.
Onward in tears he forced himself to pass.
Safely he reached his post, and every day
Some tidings came. This was the one bright
 ray

That lit the gloom that hung around the heart
Of the lone weeper—and became a part
Of life itself. One day no letter came.
Kind comforters essayed to lay the blame
On the uncertain post. But love's quick fears
Divined a cause more dreadful ; and in tears
And boding terrors passed the night away.
Next morn came tidings of a bloody fray
In which the good cause triumphed. Many read-
The news with rapture ; but the list of dead

They merely glanced at, giving scarce a thought
To those whose *lives* the victory had bought.

But see the wretched wife ! With bated breath
She scans the fearful bulletin of death.
Her fears were but too true. The much-loved
name

Is on that fatal list. Words are too tame
To paint the deep despair of that young wife !
The chilling anguish that froze up her life,
And left her stricken, helpless, dumb with grief—
A bruised flower—a broken, withered leaf.
No comfort soothed her. Moaning as in pain,
She only asked a place beside the slain
On that far battle-field—on the cold ground.
“ I’d drive away the vultures hovering round,
And wash his bloody wounds, and be so kind”—
She murinured in her wanderings of mind.
She met him soon—not on the field of blood,
But where no partings come, beyond the flood.

VII.

The pure delights of home, in all their worth,
They lightly estimate who, from their birth,
Have lingered near the same old scenes and
grounds,
And, like the sun, have kept their constant
rounds

From year to year—have seen the changes traced
On Nature's pliant features ; or supplac'd
By beauties which true taste and skill impart,
The uncouth products of the first rude art.
'Tis he who, knowing once a happy home,
Has wandered far and long, and still doth roam,
Unsettled and unhappy, that can measure
The worth of home, or estimate the treasure
Which they possess who there content remain,
Nor toil o'er lands, nor tempt the boisterous
main.

To such an one what visions will arise
Of the old homestead, where his infant eyes
First saw the light ! How Fancy, airy sprite,—
That ever-faithful angel of delight—
Will seize her wand, and, quick as lightning's
flash,

Call up a picture, and upon it dash
A vivid freshness, like the brilliant hues
That early morning flings among the dews.
Before him stands, in changeless beauty drest,
The quiet home where all that he loves best
May still be found. It is a Sabbath morn.
The dews of night still gem the blades of corn.
A gentle murmur steals along the breeze,
As if of bursting flowers and growing trees.
The sun in dazzling brightness pours his heat.
With glowing pulse the air begins to beat.
The sky, so darkly blue at morning's blush,
Takes on a delicate whiteness ; and a hush

Of deepest stillness spreads o'er all the earth,
As when God rested at creation's birth.
Even the breeze grows still, and folds its wing,
And gives the leaf a respite from its swing.
The shadows darker grow beneath the trees.
Within the house, the musing wanderer sees
Just as of old, the father, with a look
Serene but serious, poring o'er his book,
And drinking in, with greedy thought, the lore
Of some strong thinker of the days of yore.
There sits the mother in her wonted place,
Or moves among her duties, with a face
Of gentle kindness, and the eye of love
That seems a reflex of the heaven above.
The children, brothers, sisters, all appear
Just as they did when, many and many a year
Long gone, the quiet Sabbath morn arose
With all its wealth of blessing and repose.
The blue-eyed boy that scarce can hold his glee—
The prattling thing beside her mother's knee,
Lisping her little verse of morning praise—
And older ones, who restless sit and gaze
Out on the emerald meads where violets grow,
And strawberries ripen in the bright sun's glow,—
All plain before him stand just as they were
When life was young and all the world seemed
fair.
For memory never travels with the years.
The child we've lost forever a child appears,

And with the cherubs near the Saviour lingers,
And strikes a tiny harp with baby fingers.

At length the days of absence long prolonged,
With strange adventures, chances, perils
 thronged,

Approach their close ; and the self-banished man,
Towards the spot where being had its dawn,
Directs his face. O'er many a league of space
With longing heart he posts ; and now the place,
Where centre all his hopes and thoughts, he nears.
The curling smoke-wreath 'gainst the sky appears.
The road winds round a copse, when, lo ! he sees
The dear old house snug nestling 'mong the trees—
But slightly touched by age, a little browned
By Time's rude pencil in his mighty round,
Who paints a change on all. He stops, o'ercome
By deep emotion, as again his home,
So loved, so lost, so oft beheld in dreams,
Stands out before him ; and his memory teems
Out all its treasures, garnered from the day
When childish thought first felt its conscious
 sway.

His feelings mastered, on he goes, and soon
Upon the threshold stands. O ! what a boon
To homeless wanderer, coming from the cold,
Unfeeling world, to stand there as of old
And know that he's at home ! His mother
 meets him,
And with a mother's heart felt blessing greets
 him,—

Clasps to her bosom, with the yearning joy
A mother only feels, her darling boy.
For still a boy she deemed him when he roved
Afar and long, and as a boy still loved.
The family gather in from shop and field,
And kindling hearts a joyous welcome yield.
The blue-eyed boy so full of life and glee,
That oft in dreams he saw beyond the sea,
Alone was missing. Quick the mother read
The anxious glance. "He's gone," she simply
said,
And turned away. The strong man bowed his
head,
And unused tears of bitter sorrow shed.
In all things else, although the years had laid
On these a weight of age, on those had shed
A wealth of youth and grace, home seemed un-
changed,—
None touched with envy — none in heart
estranged.
In due time all the story's told and heard
Of what's been seen and done, and what occurred
In that long separation. And at last,
The wanderer, all his cares and troubles past,
Lays down his staff, content no more to roam,
And grants it true that "there's no place like
home."

VIII.

O let our homes be happy ! Throw a charm
Around them that will shield and keep from
harm ;

That when on the young spirit comes the hour
Of deep temptation in its mighty power—
When Pleasure's sweet entreaty courts the ear,
And deadliest sins in forms of grace appear,
The power of home's attractions and delight
May wield an influence of resistless might.
How dread the thought that ruin deep may fall
On many a soul, may drag it down a thrall
To Satan and his crew, because that place,
That should all fond and winsome things em-
brace,

Is made repulsive, blank, unlovely, cold—
A place where snarling enmities may hold
Malignant court.

Whatever may be said,—
By whatsoever rules the youth be bred—
Whatever learn from many an ancient tome,
*Home makes the man, and woman makes the
home.*

Her care, her patient toil, her blithesome ways ;
Her gentle teachings in our infant days—
Her pleasant words, her sunny smile, her face
Of beauty or of goodness, and her grace.

In manner and in mind—these are the spell
That draws our willing hearts at home to dwell.
There wife or mother, sister, daughter reigns,
And by the power of love her sway maintains.
Does man resist her will, her rights assail?
“She stoops to conquer”—yields but to prevail.
Does he forsake her—fly from fancied ill?
He can’t forget her—can but love her still,
And soon returns a captive in her chain,
And lives her willing, happy slave again.

For she and home are one, and ne’er apart
Can one without the other fill the heart.
Home without woman’s blessed face would be
A garden robbed of flowers—a leafless tree,—
A sky without a sun, or stars, or moon—
An unstrung lute—a viol out of tune.

And what a power is this! to tell the heart,
Be happy! or to say to joy, depart!
To plant the sweetest flowers in home’s parterre,
Or set the deadly nightshade blooming there!
To make one spot the unfailing place of rest,
Where heart-sore mortals may be truly blest,—
Or fill it full of passion’s rankling stings—
Of anger’s taunts, or envy’s bitter flings!
To train the heart and educate the mind
To all that’s good and noble and refined—
Or leave the royal palace of the soul
To run to ruin, and become the hole
Of hissing serpents, and the hateful den
Of vices worse than beasts or savage men!

But what can make a home to charm the heart,

And save from the seductive power and art
That evil, protean-shaped, employs to sway
The innocent and young from virtue's way?
What can the mother do to bind her boy
By ties that naught can weaken or destroy,
To Home and Heaven? Betimes she must infuse,

When the soul's soil is mellow, and the dews
Of earliest thought are falling, seeds of love
For truth and virtue and the God above—
That infinite Benefactor who has given
All he enjoys on earth and hopes in Heaven.
Th' expanding mind to every beauteous thing
Should be led on, and taught to lift its wing
Above the grovelling things on earth that lie,
And soar towards and even beyond the sky.
Books should abound, the noblest and the best
That e'er have grown from loftiest minds in quest
Of truth and wisdom. Feed the fancy well
With poesy's creations—the sweet spell
Of Shakspeare's numbers, and the lofty theme
And trancing thought of Milton's noble dream.
And all that boundless world where Reason lays
Her treasures, spread before his spirit's gaze.
There let him revel.—Give your child a taste
For all these glorious things, and then the waste
And barren pleasures of the world will never
Engage his soul, or from his home e'er sever

The close affection that they only feel
Who find there both their pleasure and their
weal.

IX.

But homes are not all happy—if that name,
Which touches myriad hearts as with a flame
Of holy fire, can be bestowed on hovels
Where wretchedness with vice and squalor
grovels.
Would Heaven such homes were not! But yet
like blots
They cover earth's fair bosom, and like spots
Putrescent, tell how foul and black within
The heart of our humanity is with sin.
And some of these were once abodes of rest,
And calm contentment nestled in their breast.
But as to Eden, so to them there came
The Serpent, with his spawn of vice and shame,
And laid them waste, and drove out peace and
love,
And all that makes man's home like that above.
The cursed greed of gold filled all the soul,
And dragged to crime and folly; or the bowl,
Impregnated with madness by the serpent's art,
Inflamed the brain and brutalized the heart,—

The man of lofty thought and aims brought low,
And filled his home with death and want and woe,
Until 'twas made a very demon's lair,
Where curses mixed with groans of deep despair.

But let the curtain drop on such foul sinks
Of human vileness—where the spirit drinks
Its deepest draughts of misery. Let us turn
To where the morning star begins to burn,
The glowing presage of that glorious day
When all man's vileness shall be cleansed away.

That day will rise. Already on the sky
The streakings of the dawn declare it nigh.
Although great sins abound, and direful wars
Are raging madly, as if fierce-visaged Mars
Were still the god we worshipped, there appear,
'Mid all the wrong and misery, signs of cheer
That Peace and Righteousness, in fond embrace,
Ere long will bless the world. Then every place
Where mortals dwell beneath the heaven's blue
dome,

Will be a place of rest—a happy home.

But there's a home beyond the shining spheres,
Which, 'mid the pleasures of these earthly years,
Must oft be in our thoughts,—a home that never
Can feel earth's loss and changes, but forever
Grow bright and beauteous as the ages roll
In endless cycles round the eternal pole.
That home is where God's boundless host of
worlds
Hold their allegiance—whence his power unfurls

The starry banner of his vast domain,—
Where countless spirits own his righteous reign.
In those bright mansions peace and love abound,
And purest pleasures run their ceaseless round.
There knowledge from the boundless sea distils
Of God's infinite wisdom, and in rills
Perennial flows to fill the thirsting soul
Long as its years of endless being roll.
There may we hope, when life and all its toils,
Its pleasures, griefs— even that from which recoils
The trembling spirit, fearful death—are past,
To reach, through faith in God, a rest at last.
There, where no fears disturb, no partings come,
The loved and lost on earth may find a happy
home.

M I S C E L L A N E O U S .

THE COURT OF DEATH.

[DESCRIPTIVE OF THE PAINTING OF THE "COURT OF DEATH," BY REM-
BRANDT PEALE.]

WITHIN a cavern vast, where sluggish flows
Oblivion's stream, and dripping rocks enclose
A dismal mist, the king of mortal fate,
Enthroned in might, and robed in gloomy state,
Holds his mysterious Court. Upon his face,
Solemn and calm, the keenest eye can trace
No marks of malice ; nor of pity there
Does one soft, yielding lineament appear.
Beneath his feet a youthful form lies low,
Once proud in strength, and flushed with life's
full flow.

His supple ministers around him wait,
Or at his bidding fly, with wills elate
For deeds of woe.

On this side ruthless WAR,
With visage stern and vengeful, lies afar,

Pushing his slaughtering way, with crushing
tread,

'Mid throngs of maddened men made heaps of
dead;

While 'neath the cruel trampings of the strife
Lie crouched the wondering babe and pleading
wife.

Before him, CONFLAGRATION, high in air
Heaving her flaming torches, flings their glare,
Lurid and fitful, on his deathful path,

And rushes fiercely onward, red with wrath.

Behind him, PESTILENCE and FAMINE stalk,
Close-pressing on his heels, and making mock,
With their most hideous faces, grim and gaunt,
Of all the grandeur which he makes his vaunt:
His victim, stricken, bleeding, ghastly lies,
Nor heeds nor hears th' exulting victor's cries.

But not by cruel deeds and carnage dire,
By Famine, Plague, and swift-devouring Fire,
Does Death his fatal power exert alone,
And still the pulse, and force th' expiring groan.
These, eager, ready, fly at his command,
And pour destruction o'er the doomed land.

But other shapes, less fierce, yet strong to kill,
Obsequious stand, and wait to do his will.

Here PLEASURE, luring goddess, plump and fair,
With witching face, and neck and bosom bare,
Proffers her cup, with love and beauty graced,
And sweetly importunes her guests to taste.

They drink ; but as the draught their soul enchant^s,

The giddy, zoneless girl, INTEMPERANCE,
With hair unbound, flushed cheeks, and leering
eyes,

Impregn^s with drugs the chalice ; and then plies
The half-crazed votary's brain with thoughts of
woe,

That drive him to the death he would forego.

REMORSE, by horror scourged, cries out—"too
late!"

Covers his face and rushes on his fate.

By fiends pursued, DELIRIUM TREMENS calls
For help in vain, and shuddering, writhing falls
In hopeless agony ; while at his side,
Maddened with shame, the coward SUICIDE
Plucks from his riven heart his gory blade,
Staggers and dies, and flees a frightened shade.
But PLEASURE still, with sweet, seductive lips,
The sparkling chalice filling, gaily sips ;
And DRUNKENNESS, her goblet lifting high,
Exults to see her victims reel and die.

But not with War and all his murderous band,
Nor yet with reveling Pleasure, hand in hand
Close leagued with mad Intemperance, mighty
waves

Of ruin spreading, and thick sowing graves
O'er Earth, in all her isles and continents wide,
Is Death, the mighty conqueror, satisfied.

Silent, unmoved he sits—unpitying still
Issues his changeless mandate, “slay and kill,”
To other agents, who but wait to know
Their Sovereign’s will, then haste on deeds of
woe.

CONSUMPTION, soft approaching, with her breath
Sighs gently on her victim sealed for Death.
He loves the vermeil flush that paints her cheek,
Nor dreams that ’tis her presence makes him
weak.

Listless he lies ; sweet languors o’er him spread,
And dreams of life amuse, till life has fled.

Beside him FEVER droops, with anguished brow,
And frame relaxed, and head reclining low.

The parted lips, flushed face and anxious stare
The monarch’s fatal power and work declare.

Here wretched HYPOCHONDRIA sprawling lies,
With half-averted face and straining eyes,
Frightened by phantasies, a horrid crew,

That still the self-tormented wretch pursue ;

While there, the halting prey of GOUT appears,
And wan DESPAIR, with grief too deep for tears.
Far happier he whom APPOLEXY dread

By one fell blow hurls sudden to the dead.

No pangs he feels, not even death’s last throes,—
While *they* drag out long years of lingering
woes.

Such be the courtiers that surround the throne
Of Death, the monarch, and his mastery own.

Each vies with each to inflict the tyrant's doom,
And make the earth a pest-house and a tomb.

But who is this, of calm and reverent mien,
Bent down with years, but with a brow serene,
Who comes before Death's presence stern and
cold,

And craves the boon of dying—who so bold ?
It is the aged CHRISTIAN, whom sweet FAITH
Cheers and delivers from the fear of death.
Safe in her Heavenly arms she bears him up,
While joyfully he quaffs the bitter cup.

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE YEAR.

I'm the father of motherless daughters—
(Thus sings the gray-beard year)—
I'm the father of brotherless daughters twelve,
 And my lofty palace they cheer.
For I live in a palace of splendor ;
 Its walls are azure and gold ;
Its floors the broad earth and the sea ;
 It swings in the ether cold.

My daughters are fair and filial—
 They serve in their turn to me ;
They garnish my home with crystal gifts,
 And with products of land and sea.
They feed my myriad retainers,
 Reward them for all their toil ;
They give them to lie 'neath the starry dome
 Of my grand and magnificent hall.

My eldest is stern and pallid,
Her mien is stately and bold ;
But she loves my people, and laughs to see
Them merry when she is cold.

I call her my JANUARY—
For she opens my palace door ;
She walks like a vestal in peaceful white—
And carpets with snow my floor.

My second is like her sister—
Her air more rough and free ;
I gave her an unpoetical name,
As rugged and harsh as she.
Her reign was short ; and another—
My MARCH, with a gentle mien—
Assumed the throne of my royal hall,
And ruled with a sway serene.

In smiles and tears came APRIL,
And with her delicate hand
She stripped my floors of their carpet cold,
And invited the breezes bland.
She had scarce withdrawn to her chamber,
When MAY, through the southern gate,
Tripped in, clad gayly in green and flowers,
Like a maid to her bridal elate.

But JUNE is the Queen of my daughters—
A peerless beauty is she ;
She scattered to all her brilliant gifts,
And smiled on each devotee.
She decked my palace with roses—
Flung verdure and gold from her train ;—
With sunny smiles and tears of joy
She cherished the growing grain.

JULY is languid and lovely,
Warm-passioned—with pouting mouth ;
She lazily lounged on her tapestried couch,
And sighed for the gale of the South.
With the perfume of flowers, and warblings
Of birds, she soothed her repose ;—
She suffered the reapers to ravage my halls,
And smiled as she sunk in a doze.

She slept—and her sister AUGUSTA,
A haughty, voluptuous maid,
Became the queen of my court and realm,
And a sceptre of majesty swayed.
Her breath was hot as the simoon—
Her blood beat strong in her veins ;—
She painted the palace with gorgeous hues,
And heaped it with golden grains.

A buxom lass is SEPTEMBER,
Her cheek is dimpled with health ;
She romped with the zephyr and sighed with the
south,
She smiled at her garnered wealth.
She laughed when she looked at the flowers—
The garlands her sisters had twined ;
She filled their places with luscious grapes
And apples of brilliant rind.

OCTOBER, November, December—
This trio has last made me glad ;
OCTOBER was sometimes sunny and bright,
And sometimes gloomy and sad.
A fickle child was NOVEMBER,
And tempests with sunshine would twine ;
But cold as her eldest sister had been,
Was DECEMBER—the last of my line.

And now with my motherless daughters—
Queens regent of earth and of air—
With my troop of brotherless sisters twelve,
I am quitting my palace fair.
We have ruled in the fear of Heaven ;
We have measured a cycle of time ;—
And at last, to our home in eternity's realm,
We pass from our natal clime.

WINTER'S PARTING SONG.

Away, away to my frigid home,
Where the glittering icebergs tower,
No more the fields of the South I'll roam,
Nor scathe its lawns in my power.
I long to fly where the Northern blasts
Flap wings of feathery frost ;
Where Night her cloak o'er the white earth casts,
With streaks of the morning crossed.

O'er the dark, cold waves of my Northern sea,
That dash on an ice-bound shore,
I long to skip in my uncurbed glee,
And dance to their music's roar.
'Mid sunny homes have I wandered long,
And scattered my crystal treasures ;
I've marshalled the host of my tempest throng,
And the winds have served my pleasures.

I flung my robe over meadow and hill,
My white, unsullied mantle ;
I spread its skirts round forest and mill,
And lapped them soft and gentle.
But the bold-faced sun has oped his eye
On my gifts so white and tender ;
I'll gather them up, and away I'll hie
To my palace of crystal splendor.

I sealed the lake with my icy seal,
And locked the stream from its flowing :
I laid my hand on the miller's wheel,
And I stopped the boatman's rowing.
But I'll break my seals and loose my bands,
And free the slaves of my power.
I'll hasten back to my frozen lands,
Where the glittering icebergs tower.

A RAILROAD DISASTER.

[“The bridge gave way, and the whole train was precipitated into the gulf, a distance of fifty feet. Sixty dead bodies have been taken from the wreck.”—*Newspaper.*]

THE hour of four approaches. Groups of men,
Upon the platform standing here and there,
Hold idle converse on the current news—
The hundred themes of passing interest that
The minds engage of thoughtless, or, perchance,
Of thoughtful, mortals. Here, some sit apart,
Communing silent with their souls ; or dreaming
Some lovely dream of home ; or building castles
Of future happiness, or wealth, or fame.
With step impatient others walk from point
To point, anxious to hear the signal sharp
That shall announce the moment of departure—
Departure whither ? Ah, they know it not !
There sits, with much of patience in her look
And mien, a calm-browed mother. In her lap
An infant sprawls, and chirrups in its glee,
Or, tired and restless, whimpers out its plaint.

And yonder stands the huge and ponderous engine,
As quiet as an Arab's conquered steed—
But strung with might, and with a heart that strains
To burst its pent-up fury forth. The hot Steam hisses spiteful through its nostrils; while The engineer, with look of confidence, Assured that all is safe, leans carelessly Against the mighty giant's brow, or lays His arm caressingly upon his back.

But see! The monster moves! He seems to live! With strong but gentle impulse back he pushes The train of passive cars. And now they stand Beside the platform. Fiercely shrill the whistle Sends forth the startling signal of departure. The people press with selfish haste within The cars and drop upon their seats, as though Each feared there were not room enough for him And all the rest. Again that piercing shriek Resounds. A belch of steam and smoke, a quick Jerk, and a running clanking from end to end— And slowly the lengthened train moves on its course.

Each moment gives increase of speed, till like A storm, with rush and roar, 'mid clouds of dust It flies along with grand and terrible power. Now suddenly it stops, as though the spirit That gave such fearful strength and motion were At once withdrawn. Again it starts—again

It flies, and fiercely flaps its iron wings
Till all the earth doth tremble. On it speeds
As if ten thousand demons gave it chase,
Resolved to drive it down some dreadful gorge,
With all its precious load of life, and love,
And worth, and wealth, and dash and crush
them in

Promiscuous ruin. But hark ! that steam-shriek
sounds

A fearful note ! Another, more terrific,
And fiercer ! See ! an awful chasm yawns !
Madly the engine plunges down the gulf,
Writhing and broken ; and the train, with all
Its helpless freight of terrified men and women,
Leaps after. Down they dash an endless depth,
And in a moment sink beneath the waters—
And all is still.

The ruin was complete
As fearful. Three-score souls but heard the
shriek

That was their death-knell—heard and knew no
more

Until they woke to consciousness among
The habitants that throng the eternal spheres.
A few, who passed through all of death except
The waking beyond the bourne of the unknown,
Were rescued. These rejoice, and thank the God
Of Heaven that they were saved from death.

Who knows
But that the dead rejoice that they were not ?

THE PARTING SOUL.

I STAND upon the utmost verge of earth,
And gaze with prying, craving eye to pierce
The dread, obscure, and yet half-opening mist
That stretches like a veil of unknown height
And length and depth along the bourne of time.
O for one glimpse beyond that hindering veil !
I long to see the wonders there, the strange,
Unknown, unthought of, awful things, that fill
The immeasurable realm of Him whose name
Is Infinite—His sway Omnipotence.
And yet I seem to shrink ; and while I long,
Yet almost dread to meet the bursting glories.
O Earth ! and must I leave thee ? leave thee
now—
Forever ?—leave my home ? my dear loved
friends ?
Must I be torn away from all that winds
A close and tender tie around my heart—

This failing, throbbing heart ? O draw me back,
Kind friends ! How can I venture all alone
Into the deep “rapt mystery” that bounds
And darkens all yon vast eternity !
You cannot ! No, you need not. Earth, fare-
well !

Though beautiful, and loved, and fair—farewell !
No more will day and night to me return.
No more yon gorgeous sun, that rides so high
In brightness, will around me flood his beams.
E'en now his light seems darkness on my sight,
And all the beauteous colors that he wakes
Are fading ; and my straining eyes ache with
Their unmet stare. But see ! the mist-cloud
lifts.

Light, strange and beauteous, breaks upon my
soul,
And thronging shapes of matchless nobleness
Salute my spirit's vision ! Vast and grand
And glorious, a universe of light
And life and beauty stretches boundless on.
Farewell, farewell ! I willing go to meet
Those beckoning spirits, and forever live
In very presence of the Lord of Life.

THOUGHT AND TRUTH.

In this our mortal being, thought can live
But in its manifestation. As the light
Of heaven cannot be seen unless it strike
Our opaque earth, and be reflected by
The things whereon it doth impinge, in hues
Of varied kind ; so thought may nerve itself,
And grapple with the most stupendous things
Of earth and heaven and the abyss below,
Subdue and conquer them ; yet when the truths
Are mastered, all in vain the victory,
Unless they 're cribbed within the soul, or flung
Out on the world bound in the steel-linked chains
Of human language, so that memory—
A treacherous custodian at best—
May not allow them to escape her grasp.

As language is the embodiment of thought,
Truth is its soul. And truth is infinite.
They who imagine that its boundless realm
Has been exhausted, and that in their brain

(A small receptacle, indeed,) there lies
The universe of knowledge, do but show
Their ignorance and conceit. Its grand expanse
Is but begun to be explored. 'Tis like the sea.
Its surface only has been furrowed o'er
By frail and venturous barks, each following in
Its predecessor's timid track—with care
Avoiding rocks and shoals, or places marked
As dangerous, but rejoicing, with a joy
That feels no fear, to sail o'er depths that have
Been traversd o'er and o'er from age to age.

'Tis only now and then amid the slow
And heavy-moving centuries, that, by stress
Of intellect, perhaps by force of fate,
Or inspiration of the Omniscent One,
A Homer, Shakspeare, Newton, drives his bark
Across the unvisited, uncharted wastes
Of unknown truth, and bears an argosy
Of priceless wealth back to the shore. They go,
They come, and bring their treasures ; but the
bearings

And distances to those rich mines, none but
Those mighty intellects have ever known ;
Or, if discovered, they've been found to be
But empty caves, where precious gems once
glittered.

But may there not be other mines of thought,
And other mighty spirits who may search
Them out, and other precious cargoes fetch
Of intellectual treasures which to scatter

Among earth's greedy minds? Yes, there must
be

A world of sealed ideas. But who and where
Is he who bears the high credentials that
Import the power and give the right to break
The seals, to ope the vault, and seize and take
The treasure?

Truth is God's; and he who dares
A hand profane upon it place, or all
Unbidden, and with curious eye, to press
Within the holy place to gaze, commits
A sacrilege. But with an earnest heart,
In modest confidence, let him who would
Be wise, and learn the wondrous things that lie
Still undiscerned, though all uncovered and
Abroad in the great universe, address
Himself to studious and patient thought—
Neglecting nothing for its littleness,
Nor shrinking from the vast; remembering,
Who seeks the highest may attain thereto—
Who strives not after never gains the prize.

MORNING.

SEE you that soft and mellow tinge of light
That tints the border of the eastern sky—
Scarce brighter than the maid's unconscious
smile,
The glimmer of the happy soul within ?
The stars that glowed so clear and bright upon
Heaven's azure frontlet, now grow pale and dim,
And sink away in ether's whitening depths.

The herald star of morning, as she floats
In august majesty among the orbs
Of lesser lustre, fast the blue vault mounts,
As if to escape the brightening robe of light
That morning flings upon the extended sky.
But all in vain. Her radiance soon is wrapped,
Concealed and lost in day's more brilliant blaze.
Brighter and still more brightly glows the East,
As wheels the sun his burning chariot toward
The sapphire rim of Heaven. The lofty trees
Rejoice, and wave their heads, and smile, as
Morn,

Unveiled, baptizes with a radiance pure
And white their topmost boughs. Adown their
trunks
It slowly creeps, enveloping them as with
A veil of pure transparency. At length
The sun, in full-risen splendor flings his light
Like a vast carpet o'er the outspread earth.
The crystal dewdrops—tears of sorrow wept
By eyes of angels o'er a sin-cursed world—
Sparkle like gems on blade, and leaf, and flower.
All nature seems inspired with life and love,
And in a sweetly blending melody
Of light, sound, odor, sends her orisons
Of purest joy up to the eternal throne,
Where sits Creation's glory-mantled King.
Mists brooding o'er the cool and grassy lawn,
Or lingering by the brook's meandering course,
As if enchanted by its soft, sweet music,
Fly swiftly on the sun's quick-darting rays,
And dissipate amid the upper air.
The earth, o'er all its hills, through all its vales
Rejoices and is glad, and sunny smiles
Fill every dimple of her roughened cheeks.
Such almost heavenly loveliness and joy
Succeed night's gloom, and usher in the day.

SILENCE.

AND what is silence? Go into the depths
Of yon thick forest. Go when burning noon
The dewless greensward scorches, and dries up
The tiny rivulet that morn beheld,
So clear and limpid, rippling o'er the smooth
And cooling pebbles. Penetrate among
The giant oaks, that stretch and intertwine
Their powerful arms, and nod their leafy crests
In majesty ; and 'neath the shade of the
Unfading hemlocks, to the very heart
Of that dark wood, which never sunbeam
pierced.

No sound is heard, but stillness like the deep,
Dead quietude that reigned when earth and man
Were yet unformed, oppresses ear and soul.
Now whispers a low murmur, as the breeze
Skims o'er the lofty tree-tops. But it melts
Into unbroken noiselessness again.

Even thought seems quite unlike the thoughts
that rise
Amid the jargon of the bustling world.
So pure, so vivid, so unbound, it seems
To soar upon etherial wings, and strength
Celestial gather.

But not alone in dark,
Deep, noiseless forests hangs the unmoved air
Of silence. Seek it on the lonely couch,
Amid the darkness of the midnight hour.
The aching ear grasps greedily to catch
Remotest semblance of a sound. The blood,
That, slow and sluggish, throbs along the veins,
Makes its pulsations almost audible.
The breeze without—whose fannings soft could
scarce
On glowing cheek of fairest maid be felt—
With murmurs distant, low, and sweet as voice
Of angels heard by ancient seers, brings to
The mind, all throbbing with the oppressive
stillness,
Welcome relief. 'Tis then the soul, alone
With its own being, like a point of life
And feeling fixed in an infinity
Of nothingness, turns inward on itself,
And feasts delighted on its own reflections;
Or, fancy-winged, the vast invisible
It mounts, which stretches infinite around
The all-attracting throne of Deity.

LIFT THE GLORIOUS BANNER.

YE sons of sires who bravely dared
 In Freedom's name to fling
The gauntlet down, and meet the hosts
 Of Britain's haughty king—
Arouse your strength ! shake off your sloth !
 And prove your birthright true !
By the Constitution and Union stand,
 And the flag of red, white and blue !
Then lift our glorious Banner high !
 Shout, shout as its folds sweep against
 the sky !
Seize sword and rifle, and swear you'll
 be
True Sons of the Heroes of Liberty !

When foreign foes our land assail,
 Or traitors treason plot ;—
If prosperous days bring wealth and ease,
 And even Virtue's bought ;

Forget not, but remember still
The price for Freedom paid—
The blood, the treasure, sufferings, tears,
On your country's altar laid.
Then lift our glorious Banner, &c.

United let our country be—
No strifes of State with State ;
Let North with South and East with West
Hold friendship strong as fate.
Oh ! crush with mighty hand the fiend
Whose tempting words would lure
One State to break the sacred band
That keeps our Union sure.
Then lift our glorious Banner, &c:

Almighty Ruler, God of Truth !
Still guide us by thy grace,
And make this broad and goodly land
A heritage of peace.
Allay all malice, quell all strife,
Exalt the good and true !
Oh God, may not one star be torn
From our flag of red, white and blue !
Then lift our glorious Banner, &c.

THE CHORAL SONG OF THE STARS.

'TWAS New Year Eve, the stars were glistening,
And 'neath their gaze a poet was listening.
He thought to hear the song they sing
As through the universe they ring
The story of the closing year,
And all the thoughts and hopes that cheer,
Depress or pain, exalt or thrill,
The thousand million souls that fill
Earth's mighty continents. He heard,
Or seemed to hear, as 'twere had stirred
A spirit's breath among the chords
Of some sweet instrument ; and words
Came softly floating and touched his ear
In melodies sweet as the angels hear.
His soul mounts up on celestial wing
And lists to the song that the stars do sing :

Arise, thou beautiful, gladsome Earth !
We chant thee a New Year song ;
The delicate chords of a million rays
We strike in a countless throng.

'Tis many a hundred ages since
We looked on thy primal light,
And "sang together" in praise of Him
Who stationed thee in our night.

All hail ! thou world of the azure sky ;
Of the moonlight's quiet gleam ;
Of hill and meadow, and forest and vale,
Of the lake and rippling stream :
Of the winter's floor of marble ice,
And his carpet of downy snows ;
Of the anthem grand that the tempest sings
When abroad in his might he goes !

But not for these do we chant thy praise,
Thou star of Heaven's delight ;
Though all these beautiful things and forms
Still hallow thee in our sight.
Because thou art the abode of man,
In the image of God create,
Do we strike the harp of the Universe,
And sing of thy high estate.

A mansion of love to him thou art,
A home of delight and joy,
Where simple Content may fold her wing,
And Virtue have sweet employ ;—
A look-out point o'er the realms of space,
Whence rational man may scan
The wonders of God's omnipotent power,
And learn his magnificent plan.

And not the meanest of man's delights
Are oft his griefs and sorrows ;
They are rosy clouds in an evening sky—
The shadows of brilliant morrows.
And death—it is but the gloomy gate,
Through which earth's myriads pass
To people the empty worlds that lie
Through the realms of infinite space.

Roll on, bright world, in thy grand career !
A million stars look on
From afar, and wonder, and watch thy course,
As they did through ages gone.
Though small thy lamp in the vast concave
Of night's unnumbered hosts,
Thou'rt great in His sight whose eye takes in
Creation's uttermost coasts.

And now as again thou'st filled thy round
Of a billion miles, O Earth,
We take our place in the waltz of worlds
And joyously sing thy birth.
Welcome, thrice welcome again art thou !
To join our heavenly choir,
And mingle thy note of the *lost and saved*
With the tones of the universe' lyre.

A NIGHT IN SUMMER.

Proud Day withdraws his head,
And drops about his bed
 His crimson curtain ;
While Evening, dusk and pale,
Puts on her azure veil
 And starry mantle.
The air with heat is dull—
And Darkness seems to cull
 A nosegay fitting
For his sweet ebon queen,
The odors of every scene
 The wind has ravished.

The blushing twilight grows
More pale, like damask rose
 In spot sequestered ;
Till all the concave blue
Dips o'er the earth's broad view,
 And shuts her lattice

That opened towards the West.
And now comes sweet-eyed Rest
 With lethe laden,
To bathe the brow of care
And steep the temples fair
 Of love-lorn maiden.

Grim Night, in trailing robe,
O'er the half-conquered globe
 Star-crowned advances.
Around his car a troop
Of dreams and phantoms group,
 That fling their glances
Upon each sleep-shut eye,
As silently they hie
 Upon their mission.
Far from the path of day
They hold their trackless way—
 A shadowy vision.

THE

SURVIVING SOLDIERS OF THE REVOLUTION.

YE last of all the hero band
Who with our Washington did stand,
And stayed his arm of strong command
In Freedom's holy strife !
We greet you, venerable sires !
To loftiest notes we strike our lyres ;
Our hearts, ablaze with patriot fires,
Thank Heaven that gave you life.

When battle-thunders shook the ground,
And stern hearts trembled at the sound ;
When death on gory fields was found—
Steadfast ye kept your posts.
Ye fought like men at Bunker Hill,
And felt the patriot ardor thrill
Your inmost soul, and nerve you still
To meet the oppressor's hosts.

On Monmouth's bloody plain ye stood;
Ye crossed the Delaware's wintry flood;
At Yorktown proved your courage good;—
 Unwavering filled your place
On every well-fought battle-field,
Where comrades' blood their valor sealed;
To deadliest onset ne'er did yield,
 Nor ever turned your face.

Hail! honored braves! once more receive
The homage that your sons would give;
And O, a patriot's blessing leave
 Before you pass away!
Your number dwindleth year by year;
Your steps to Heaven draw ever near;—
Your glory grows more bright and clear,
 As dawns th' eternal day.

THE PRINCE OF WALES

AT

THE TOMB OF WASHINGTON.

ABOVE the strand where, soft and slow,
The waters of Potomac flow,—
Upon a gentle lift of land,
Where solemn trees majestic stand,
Sole sentinels to guard the spot
Most sacred in a patriot's thought—
A royal cortege silent pass
Along the walks, and through the grass.
They stop,—the heir of England's throne
Bows at the tomb of Washington.

Scarce four-score years since, from that spot,
Might have been heard, as brother fought
With brother, the dread cannon's roar
That echoed up from Yorktown's shore.
Now he who fought that final fight,
And won the victory for the right,

Lies here in simple, grand repose—
His tomb a shrine for friends and foes ;
While he whose royal ancestor
Sent forth his myriad troops to war
'Gainst filial and fraternal foes,
Who dared resist unrighteous laws,
Stands reverent, with uncovered head,
In presence of the mighty dead ;
Paying, though late, the homage won
From England's throne by Washington.
And when, as monarch on that throne,
Past whose deep-rooted base have flown
The tides and storms of a thousand years,
The crown of British might he wears,
In memory may he hold the hour
When, 'neath that still, sepulchral bower,
He knelt before the mighty name
Of him with more than kingly fame ;—
And may the act a hostage prove
Of lasting harmony and love.

MIND AND MUSCLE.

SWELL the mighty song to Heaven
Of the men whose toil has given
Eden blessedness to earth ;
Let the wings of Poesy rustle
O'er their fruits of thought and muscle—
Shout, in every tongue, their worth !

Priests are they of Earth and Ocean,
Light, and Air, and Power, and Motion—
Worshippers at Nature's shrine ;
Theirs no bloody conqueror's story—
Theirs no statesman's hazy glory—
Theirs are honors more divine.

Rank they spurn aristocratic ;
Arts they use not diplomatic—
They are equal, free, sincere.
To be patient, their tuition ;
To be useful, their ambition ;
Hope their beacon, firm they steer.

Thought and Labor Virtue greeting—
Earthly spirits Heavenly meeting—
Clasp in fond and pure embrace.
Art, Religion, Knowledge, Labor,
Each to other friend and neighbor,
Join to win Time's glorious race.

Men of Genius, men of merit!
Strive—be strong! ye shall inherit
Earth, when wars and thrones are past.
Truth your aim, and Truth your power,
Peace your angel, Fame your dower—
Work and conquer to the last.

REVERY.

How oft, when still awake, we seem,
To wake to life as from a dream—
To startle at a sudden thought,
And view the hours past as naught !
When care has long our minds engaged,
Or when with passion we have raged ;
When tossed from wave to wave of troubles—
When joy and pleasure burst like bubbles ;
'Tis then, when reason bids us rise,
Religion beckoning to the skies,
We start, and stare, and scarce believe
The world the same in which we live ;
So changed our thoughts and feelings now—
So changed the earth, we scarce know how.
The soul feels but a burning speck
Of consciousness, amid the wreck
Of dull, dead, worthless stuff that lies
Within its scope ; and lifts its eyes
To scan, by fancy's mighty power,
The wondrous things that sweep and tower

Beyond the bourne of earth's small star,
Where God's immense creations are.

Ah, these are moments when the seal
Of immortality we feel
Upon our inmost soul—can swear
By Him whose finger placed it there,
And by His inspiration taught
The blissful, the tremendous thought,—
That we will never, *cannot* die,
But *live* throughout eternity.

THE EVENING STAR.

BRIGHT Star ! how many eyes have gazed
Upon thy pure and steady ray !
In thee how many glances kissed
The glance of loved ones far away !

How many tears of grief or pain
Have sparkled in thy quiet gleam !
How many smiles more brightly glowed,
Enkindled by thy joyous beam !

Sweet, constant, faithful, holy Star !
Emblem of love, and hope, and truth !
Thou'st coursed the heavens, untired, unchanged,
Since first thou walked in virgin youth.

When Earth first sprang from chaos night
Into the warm embrace of day,
Thy gentle beams, like friendship's smile,
Cheered her along her untried way.

On thee has looked, with anxious eye,
The storm-tossed sailor far at sea,
And thought of her, the faithful one,
Whose love-smile brightened even thee.

Amid the pain, and groans, and death,
Of fields where fought and fell the brave,
On thee the stricken warrior gazed,
And prayed to Him with power to save;

And sent a thrilling, last farewell,
In thought, to loved ones far away,
Who, looking anxious up, received
The mystic message through thy ray.

O may'st thou be to him, to all
Who look on thee from field or wave,
A token of the blessed hope
That tells of life beyond the grave.

SUNDAY.

A DAY of rest for the weary and lorn ;
A day of peace for the driven and worn ;
A day of hope for the sunk in despair ;
A day of release for the harrassed with care ;
A day to forget our sorrows and woes ;
A day to forgive our penitent foes ;
A day to be kind to the troubled and sad ;—
A day to be earnest, and thoughtful and glad.

THE HEART.

LIKE the harp whose sweet, sad tones
Are stirred by the zephyr's kiss—
Tones sweet as the airs that Angel's sing
In their Eden bowers of bliss—
Is the heart that throbs in the youthful breast
With the joy of innocent peace still blest.

Ever mute the harp remains
When rudely the tempest sweeps ;—
O'er its strings in vain do the fingers stray—
All silent its music sleeps :
When the unseen wing of the breeze flits by
'Tis moved to the tenderest melody.

So the heart, engulfed in grief,
Or driven by passion's gale,
Will remain unmoved as the beetling rock
That the leaping waves assail ;
But touched by the breath of a friendly word,
With emotions tender and strong 'tis stirred.

THE AMBITIOUS STUDENT'S LONGINGS.

CAN Fame be mine? Cannot arise
To me the hues of gorgeous ray,
That glow before the piercing sight
Of those whose memories ne'er decay?
Why feels my soul these struggling thoughts,
If they, unborn, must melt away?

From childhood's playful, nestling hour
My spirit's arms have seemed to wear
A might which yet my soul would lift
Far up the cliffs of fame, and bear
It proudly to the haloed top
Of great renown, and leave it there.

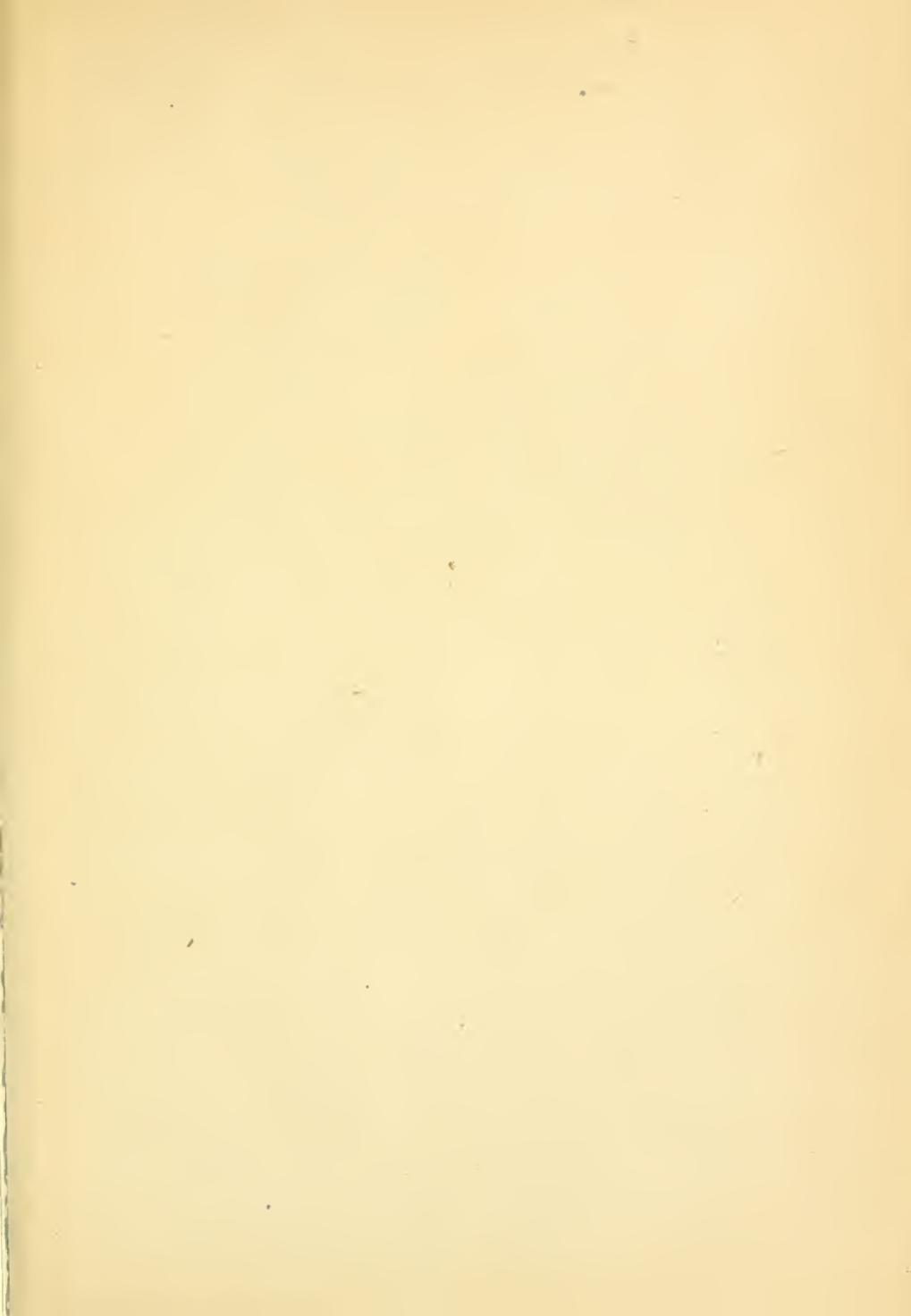
No feeling this mere moment-bred,
Which storm, or calm, or moon, or star
Can stir or light to life. It has
A home within me, though from far
Has flown the spark that lit its birth.
'Twill live while God and nature are.

Say you 'tis all a dream ? A dream
Then let it be. And yet 'tis sore
To feel a burning, crisping thirst,
When at the very spirit's door
There seems a gem-walled well, whence dews
Fresh dropped from Heaven unceasing pour

Fill my embrace, whate'er thou art !
Sea-froth—a bubble—empty air !
Though thou shouldst prove all vain—not worth
My spirit's lowest, meanest care—
Fame ! I would know thy emptiness—
Thy lightest vanity would share !

T H E E N D .









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